

EMPLOYEES' VIEWPOINT ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) PRACTICES: A PRELIMINARY STUDY ON UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

In the past few decades, research in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has emerged tremendously in the corporate and academic world. Organisations today realise the significance of being ethical in their business in order to attract external stakeholders and retain employees. However, majority of the previous studies on CSR mainly focuses on the external stakeholders such as customers, media, investors, and government while the influence of CSR practices from an employee's perspective (as an internal stakeholder) remains largely undiscovered. The current study investigates university as an entity of organisation to explore their CSR practices. The key focus of this study is on one of the research universities in Malaysia, namely Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). The purpose of this study is to identify employees' perception towards selected dimensions of CSR. A quantitative (survey) method and multistage sampling was employed in this study, whereby questionnaires were distributed to 200 UPM staff (academic and non-academic), with only 98 valid respondents. The respondents were selected from Social Science cluster faculties, Science cluster faculties, offices, centers, and divisions. This study focuses primarily on descriptive statistics. The findings show that respondents perceived CSR practices positively and the three (3) specific dimensions, namely compliance with international certified standard, labour rights, and community driven have shown to be the significant aspects of CSR practices perceived by the UPM staff. Further studies to

replicate the research in different universities (public or private) in Malaysia to explore more on CSR practices by respective universities were suggested. Future studies were also recommended, in that relationships between CSR, job satisfaction, and corporate reputation need to be carried out in order to see the links between those variables.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Employees, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is widely practised in the corporate world. However, globalisation has gone beyond corporate sectors, in which a growing interest in the practice is seen among the education institutions. Higher education institutions are beginning to be concerned with CSR initiatives (Christensen, Thrane, Jørgensen & Lehmann, 2009). CSR initiatives in the Malaysian universities are targeted towards meeting their Key Performance Indicators (KPI). For instance, Weymnas (2010) added that many higher education institutions are likely to adapt business approach in order to survive in the drastic change of the industry as a result of today's competitive environment. Therefore, universities are jumping into the band wagon, in which more higher education institutions adapt to these new economic realities.

In particular, some of the key social responsibilities of a higher education institution are aimed at developing one's learning and human capital, preservation of the knowledge, and fostering legitimacy for the nation and society (Gumport, 2000). Hence, universities' activities with alumni, employees, students and other daily operations have an immediate impact on the society. The impact can potentially be seen based on the quality of education, notions of autonomy, academic freedom, and the responsibilities towards the society as well as the environment (Vasilescu, Barna, Epure & Baicu, 2010).

Scholars have questioned whether or not there is relevance in practising CSR in higher education institutions. One of the key questions is, to what extent do universities manage their CSR mechanism? However, the lack of specific law give rise to questions on the legitimacy and significance of such CSR activities by the universities. The idea that CSR initiatives in public institutions remain a voluntary act makes adhering to relevant and appropriate CSR standards crucial in universities. Hence, this is an area that requires further investigation (Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh & Daraei, 2011; Asemah, Okpanachi & Olumuji, 2013).

Majority of the previous studies on CSR was mainly focused on the external stakeholders such as the customers, media, investors, and the government (Ihlen, 2008; Werther & Chandler, 2006). However research on the influence of CSR practices from employees' perspectives, as an internal stakeholder remains largely undiscovered (Collier & Esteban, 2007). This is particularly lacking in a Malaysian context. Therefore, this study aims to provide a platform for other researchers to explore this missing gap in the literature, particularly in the context of understanding Malaysian education institutions' CSR initiatives.

A classic study on CSR was mainly focused on a four-dimensional pyramid model in which Carroll (1979) emphasised that CSR is comprised of economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities. CSR dimensions that explore wider categories of CSR, and focus specific items relevant to the Malaysian context such as 1) human rights; 2) labour rights; 3) environment stewardship; 4) social reporting; 5) financial necessity; 6) compliance with certified international standards; and 7) community driven; are largely unexplored (Mohd Hasan, 2013). Most importantly, Mohd Hasan (2013) suggested that these items are pertinent in Malaysia because the items were compiled and collated from existing global CSR best practices as well as local standards.

Therefore, the main aim of the study is to identify UPM employees' perceived understanding towards selected CSR dimensions. This study sought to be the first avenue to contribute to the limited exploratory research, whereby the specific CSR dimensions relevant for Malaysian institutions are currently less explored, given that a developing country has specific policies and requirements. This has supported the study done by Tee (2008) whereby he stated that corporate social reporting in Malaysia was made "mandatory" during the 2007 Prime Minister's budget announcement. This is evident in the role of government in encouraging transparency in CSR reporting in Malaysia (Atan, Razali & Mohamed, 2010). Hence, this study seeks to further contribute to the existing CSR literature by attempting to view CSR practices within the context of employees as a primary stakeholder. The study aims to help Malaysian universities to develop their own CSR policies and programmes as a tool to give back to the community in the long run.

METHODS & PROCEDURES

Participants

Out of the 200 questionnaires, 102 were returned (51% response rate). However, only a total of 98 respondents answered all items in the questionnaire. Therefore, only 98 questionnaires were valid which represent the total of 49% of the success rate. The number of valid questionnaires is an acceptable number, in view of time and cost constraints.

Majority of the respondents in this study were female (70%), and the rest was male (30%). More than half of the respondents were non-academic staff (62.2%) with ages ranging from 21-30 years old (42.9%). Out of the total respondents, quarter was bachelor degree holders (39.8%) with less than 5 years working experience.

Procedures

A multistage sampling procedure was applied in this study. Researchers use a probability sampling (simple random) to get the list of places of study and then applied non-probability sampling (convenience) method to collect the data. This study was solely

focused on academics and non-academics who are employed in UPM, Serdang campus. Researchers distributed the questionnaires based on the faculties that have been selected through the list that is drawn from the simple random sampling. The faculties comprised of (Social science cluster: Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication; Faculty of Human Ecology; Faculty of Education Studies; Faculty of Economics and Management. Science cluster: Faculty of Biotechnology and Biomolecular Sciences; Faculty of Environmental Studies; Faculty of Forestry; and Faculty of Science; and other units such as Registrar office; Student Affair Division; Centre for the Advancement of Language Competence (CALC); Centre of Entrepreneurial Development and Graduate Marketability (CEM); Center of Academic Development (CADE); and Co-curriculum and Student Development Center).

The instrument

The questionnaire comprised of three (3) sections. Section A is demographic section, section B is comprised of items to measure understanding of CSR practices, and section C consists of items pertaining to CSR practices. Demographic questions in the section A were designed to gather information about respondents such as gender, category of staff, age, race, education level, tenure, position, and faculty that the respondents are associated with. Section B aims to find out how respondents perceive and understand CSR practices in general. Some of the examples of items being addressed were: “I know the meaning of the term CSR” and “CSR will be a general practice in near future”. Section C is about the specific dimensions of CSR comprising of seven (7) CSR best practice categories as compiled by Mohd Hasan (2013), which are dimensions relevant for Malaysian context. In particular, items consist of human rights; labour rights; environmental stewardship; social reporting; financial necessity; compliance with international certified standard; and community driven. The questions on section B has been adapted from (Pham, 2011; Fadun 2014) whereas the questions on section C was drawn from a compilation and collated existing best practice international standards in the literature (Pham, 2011; Turker, 2009; Lichtenstein et al., 2004; Maignan & Ferrell, 2001; Montgomery & Stone, 2009; Mohd Hasan, 2013). This survey items for section B and section C were designed as statement measured on five-point Likert-scale where 1 represent “Strongly Disagree”; 2 represent “Disagree”; 3 indicated “Somewhat Agree”; 4 represent “Agree”; and 5 indicated as “Strongly Agree”.

To test the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted. 50 set of questionnaires were distributed to the employees of UPM in the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, however only 33 questionnaires were returned, with an average rate of 66.0%. (See Table 1).

Table 1: Reliability analysis on the understanding of CSR practices and dimensions of CSR practices

Construct/ Items	Number of Items	Conbach's alpha
<u>Section B</u>		
Understanding of CSR practices	10	0.87
<u>Section C</u>		
Dimensions of CSR Practices		
Human rights	5	0.86
Labour rights	6	0.81
Environment stewardship	7	0.86
Social reporting	5	0.85
Financial necessity	5	0.91
Compliance with international certified standard	6	0.84
Community driven	7	0.88

RESULTS AND DICUSSIONS

The current study aimed to explore UPM employees on their perceived understanding towards selected CSR dimensions. Based on the results, most of the UPM staff perceived that university should conduct social responsibility initiatives. This has supported the study by Castaldo, Perrini, Masani & Tencati (2009), that CSR initiatives will help universities as an organisation to develop positive ethical identities and build relationship with the key stakeholders of the organisation such as customer and investors. Respondents also agreed that CSR will become a general practice in the future and this has supported the study done by Popa (2010), whereby in the current global business environment, academics, as an internal stakeholder and various external stakeholders have pressured corporate sectors to improve on their CSR initiatives. In particular, CSR is a way for corporations to showcase their concerns for the communities and the environment. Hence, CSR initiatives will potentially be a corporation's common act of good deeds for the society. In addition, CSR initiatives provide a favourable public image as a good public image will strengthen organisational brand, build morale within stakeholders, and even raise the value of its stocks or services (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

Table 2: The percentage, mean, and standard deviation of respondents' response to understanding of CSR practices

Understanding of CSR (n=98)	%					M	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
I know the meaning of the term corporate social responsibility (CSR).	3.1	5.1	28.6	44.9	18.4	3.70	0.93
Organisation should conduct social responsibility initiatives.	1.0	1.0	13.3	57.1	27.6	4.09	0.73
Donations to charitable and public welfare activities are the social responsibility of the company.	1.0	-	21.4	61.2	16.3	3.92	0.68
CSR provides a favorable public image.	-	4.1	26.5	50.0	19.4	3.85	0.78
Organisation has incurred extra costs for health and safety working environment.	-	7.1	37.8	41.8	13.3	3.61	0.81
CSR is concerned with treating stakeholders ethically or in a socially responsible manner.	1.0	4.2	32.7	48.0	14.3	3.70	0.80
Organisation should be concerned with protection of wide range of stakeholder interest.	-	3.1	34.7	42.9	19.4	3.79	0.79
Organisation commitment to CSR is a waste of organisational time and resources.	30.6	27.6	23.5	17.3	1.0	3.69	1.12
CSR will become general practice in near future.	-	2.0	22.4	57.1	18.4	3.92	0.70
I will make some changes in behavior for social responsibility.	1.0	1.0	24.5	62.2	11.2	3.82	0.69
) = 3.81							

* Organisation in the above statement refers to UPM.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Specific Dimensions of CSR Practices

Human rights

Every individual who works in an organisation has the opportunity to be treated fairly. According to Umlas (2009), the act of human rights promotes an organisation's social justice and improves fair distribution among affected communities. Based on Table 3, the item which has the highest mean value among all the other items was the statement organisation respecting the right to practise religion ($M=4.13$, $SD=0.85$). This is aligned with Bursa (2008), where Malaysian organisations are required to be sensitive towards employees' religious beliefs and other local values and norms, such as, allowing employees of various race to perform their prayer routine, being sensitive to diverse culture, and values. Further to this notion, Mohd Hasan (2013) emphasised that foreign-owned organisations are less likely to report the item on religion and often, locally-owned organisations are the ones likely to report on this. She added that expressing sensitivities towards a religion is a topic that is highly sensitive in a Malaysian context and therefore foreign organisation is likely to avoid reporting in their public documents (Mohd Hasan, 2013). More so, according to Ahmad and Ramayah (2012), practising ethical human aspects of CSR in Malaysia as a multi-cultural country can be significant as it represents harmony of business and society as an entity.

Table 3: Percentage, mean, and standard deviation of respondent response to human rights dimension

Statement	%					M	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
Organisation respecting the right to practise religion.	2.0	1.0	14.3	46.9	35.7	4.13	0.85
Organisation notify employees' awareness of human rights violations in company's policy.	3.1	7.1	24.5	50.0	15.3	3.67	0.93
Organisation adheres to local values, customs, norms (race, ethnicity and gender).	2.0	2.0	20.4	57.1	18.4	3.88	0.80
The management of organisation is primarily concerned with employees' needs and wants.	2.0	10.2	24.5	49.0	14.3	3.63	0.92
The managerial decisions related with employees are usually fair.	2.0	9.2	37.8	41.8	9.2	3.45	0.86
) = 3.75							

* Organisation in the above statement refers to UPM.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Labour Rights

Based on Table 4, item which has the highest mean value was organisation provides training for employees ($M=4.05$, $SD=0.76$)

($=3.77$). According to Buckley and Caple (2009), training is a planned and systematic effort to modify or develop knowledge, skills, attitude through learning experiences. The purpose of training is to enable employees to acquire abilities to

perform better in a given task and realise their potential in order to achieve effective performance. This has supported the study done by Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh and Daraei (2011) whereby in terms of the labour practices, the world leading universities provide informative resources on employee benefits, compensation, learning, and development. The website of the universities also indicated that they even emphasised the significance of healthy balanced work environment among employees. According to Manfredi & Holliday (2004) and Heathfield (n.d.), the way organisations balance work and life outside of work is by taking initiatives to adopt flexible working arrangements such as job sharing, flexible working time table, paid time off policies, and sponsored family activities or events by company.

Table 4: Percentage, mean, and standard deviation of respondent response to labour rights dimension

Statement	%					M	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
Organisation provides equal rights and opportunities for employees in recruitment and promotion.	4.1	8.2	32.7	42.9	12.2	3.51	0.96
Organisation working hours adhering to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards.	2.0	5.1	26.5	54.1	12.2	3.69	0.83
Organisation provides training for employees.	1.0	2.0	14.3	56.1	26.5	4.05	0.76
Organisation provides a quality working environment.	1.0	7.1	18.4	56.1	17.3	3.82	0.84
Organisation implements flexible policies to provide a good work and life balance for employees.	1.0	3.1	27.6	57.1	11.2	3.75	0.74
Organisation emphasises employees' health and safety during works.	2.0	4.1	23.5	53.1	17.3	3.80	0.85
) = 3.77							

* Organisation in the above statement refers to UPM.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Environment Stewardship

Environmental stewardship is the synergy effect of environment where the use of resources are based on renewable resources in order to protect the environment from pollution, minimise the use of natural resources, and environmental wastes. (Okafor, Hassan, & Hassan, 2008). As shown in Table 5, the statement organisation has an

environmentally related mission has the highest mean score among other statements ($M=3.82$, $SD=0.80$), followed by the statement organisations participate in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment ($M=3.80$, $SD=0.87$). This has aligned with the 2014-2020 strategic plan of UPM where the second goal of the plan was to create value through a strong and sustainable RDCE (UPM, n.d). This supports the study done by Sweeney and Coughlan (2008) where they emphasised that environmental stewardship requires proper execution in order to enhance the product and operations of the organisation. More so, based on Haw (2010), most of the Malaysian organisations are practising environmental stewardship by educating the public about green living.

Table 5: Percentage, mean, and standard deviation of respondent response to environment stewardship dimension

Statement	%					M	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
Organisation participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment.	3.1	2.0	25.5	51.0	18.4	3.80	0.87
Organisation implements special programs to minimise its negative impact on the natural environment.	1.0	6.1	26.5	50.0	16.3	3.75	0.84
Organisation has an environmentally related mission.	1.0	3.1	27.6	50.0	18.4	3.82	0.80
Organisation raises employees' awareness on environmental issues.	1.0	4.1	28.6	53.1	13.3	3.73	0.78
Organisation communicates greenhouse emission in tons of CO ² or equivalent.	3.1	12.2	34.7	42.9	7.1	3.39	0.90
Organisation efforts in investing environmentally efficient technology.	1.0	7.1	27.6	53.1	11.2	3.66	0.81
Organisation tries to offer environmentally friendly products.	1.0	5.1	33.7	45.9	14.3	3.67	0.82
) = 3.69							

* Organisation in the above statement refers to UPM.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Social Reporting

Based on the social reporting dimension, the statement which has the highest mean score was organisation communicates awareness towards accountability issues and action ($M=3.70$, $SD=0.86$), however this dimension has a lowest overall mean ($=3.55$) as

compared with other dimensions (see Figure 1). This is in line with the study by Tee (2008) in which he explored the motivation behind CSR reporting in Malaysian organisations and the effect of reporting in the Malaysian context. Based on Tee's findings, he suggested that in the Malaysian context, CSR reporting was relatively low. This notion supports another study done by Cowper-Smith and de Grosbois (2010), in the environmental reporting in Malaysia is still relatively low. There are several reasons for not disclose social reporting. For instance, the absence of legal regulatory enforcement and the practise of CSR standards will remain as a voluntary basis (Fombrun, 2005), lack of stakeholders' demands, the act of wanting policies to remain confidential from public, poor competitive performance, poor in performance measurement, and negative publicity (see Belal, 2007; Rowe and Guthrie, 2007).

Table 6: Percentage, mean, and standard deviation of respondent response to social reporting dimension

Statement	%					M	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
Organisation communicates awareness towards accountability issues and actions.	3.1	3.1	28.6	51.0	14.3	3.70	0.86
Organisation reveals the evaluation results of CSR activities with an official report.	2.0	4.1	43.9	39.8	10.2	3.52	0.82
Organisation practises transparency in reporting.	2.0	5.1	34.7	49.0	9.2	3.58	0.81
Organisation practises open dialogue with employees as stakeholder.	2.0	7.1	48.0	34.7	8.2	3.40	0.82
Organisation publishes the performance of CSR activities through various channels (corporate websites and the media).	1.0	3.1	46.9	35.7	13.3	3.57	0.80
) = 3.55							

* Organisation in the above statement refers to UPM.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Financial Necessity

Based on Table 7, the statement which has a higher mean score was organisation sees CSR as a strategic competitive advantage (M=3.69, SD=0.77). This proves that CSR initiatives can create value propositions (competitive advantages and positive corporate reputation) and increase profitability (Smith, 2007; Porter & Kramer, 2006). Therefore, when organisations practise CSR initiatives consistently in the long run, it can produce sustainable and inimitable competitive advantages (Smith, 2007) and improves reputational capital. Reputational capital is a value of organisation's image in a

stakeholder's mind through their interaction with organisations (Oswald, 1996). This is in line with the previous study that shows reputation capital brings advantages to the organization. For instance, reputational capital attracts employees and promotes employees' identification towards the organisation (Caruana, 1997). Further, positive reputation capital will help to attract talented employees and foster employee retention (Roberts & Dowling, 2002; Hamori, 2003).

Table 7: Percentage, mean and standard deviation of respondent response to financial necessity dimension

Statement	%					M	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
Organisation has socially responsible investment (SRI) initiatives.	2.0	7.1	36.7	45.9	8.2	3.51	0.83
Organisation has initiatives in image and reputation enhancement.	2.0	3.1	35.7	46.9	12.2	3.64	0.82
Organisation sees CSR as a strategic competitive advantage.	1.0	4.1	30.6	53.1	11.2	3.69	0.77
Organisation adopts risk management.	1.0	9.2	32.7	48.0	9.2	3.55	0.83
Organisation has direct and active two-way communication with employee as a stakeholder.	1.0	6.1	33.7	42.9	16.3	3.67	0.86
) = 3.61							

* Organisation in the above statement refers to UPM.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Compliance with International Certified Standard

In a developing nation, organisations complying with the international accredited standard such as, International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standards, is often a common CSR initiatives (Maten & Moon, 2008). For this section, the statement that has highest mean score was organisation has a comprehensive quality management system (ISO 9000/9001) (M=4.08, SD=0.87) and this d

=3.81) as compared with the other dimensions (see Figure 1). This supports the study done by Castka and Balzarova (2007) whereby they argued that the quality of ISO 9000 helps organisations to achieve an excellent business performance by considering employees and workplace issues. Castka and Balzarova further added that ISO 26000 which focuses on the social responsibility actions will help organisations to operate in an ethical and transparent way that contribute to the health and welfare of the society (ISO 26000, n.d.) According to Moratis and Conchius (2011), the aim of the ISO 26000 is to create awareness on the business decisions of organisations on the public and environment, More so, it also provides a platform for organisations to participate in the social responsibility initiatives.

However, the current finding contrasted with the study done by Mohd Hasan (2013), where the compliance with international standard was least being reported in the social responsibility reports and majority of the companies reported that they adhered to the health and safety international standard under the OSHAS 18001. This is due to the fact that UPM employees are more likely to understand ISO 9000/9001. Each UPM faculty will need to do auditing for the ISO 9000/9001 in the stipulated period of time in order to restructure and enhance the quality of university management system. This differs from privatised corporations that focus more on the health and safety issues in their reports because organisations are likely to hire foreign workers. Therefore, the health and safety issues become a significant aspect to be concerned by these organisations.

Table 8: Percentage, mean, and standard deviation of respondent response to compliance with international certified standard dimension

Statement	%					M	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
Organisation has a comprehensive quality management system (ISO 9000/9001).	2.0	1.0	18.4	43.9	34.7	4.08	0.87
Organisation has workplace and employee complaints system (SA8000).	4.1	3.1	28.6	41.8	22.4	3.76	0.97
Organisation emphasises the importance of its social responsibilities to the environment (ISO14001/14004).	2.0	4.1	30.6	41.8	21.4	3.76	0.91
Employees are requires to provide full and accurate information to all the customers (AA1000).	2.0	2.0	35.7	39.8	20.4	3.69	0.87
Organisation has health and safety policies to ensure the welfare of employees (OHSAS 18001).	2.0	2.0	35.7	39.8	20.4	3.74	0.88
) = 3.81							

* Organisation in the above statement refers to UPM.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Community Driven

Organisations' community work and philanthropic activities are aligned with the Malaysian government policies for nation building (see Abdullah, 2010). In the early development of community driven initiatives, organisations traditionally supported the

social, cultural, and environment aspects of local community by corporate giving to the non-profit organisations (Mutz, 2008). In addition to these initiatives, recent literature argues for organisations to be concerned with the moral obligation and its legitimacy in meeting with its community demands (Blomgren, 2011). Based on Table 9, the statement organisation encourages its employees to participate in voluntary activities has a highest score ($M=3.96$, $SD=0.77$) and this dimension has the second highest overall mean score ($\bar{x}=3.77$) as well. This is because in order to achieve the best result in the long term, organisations will need to reduce the negative effects on community driven (Ismail, 2009). Therefore, community driven items serve as items that need to be included in CSR initiatives in order to increase the social and workforce qualities.

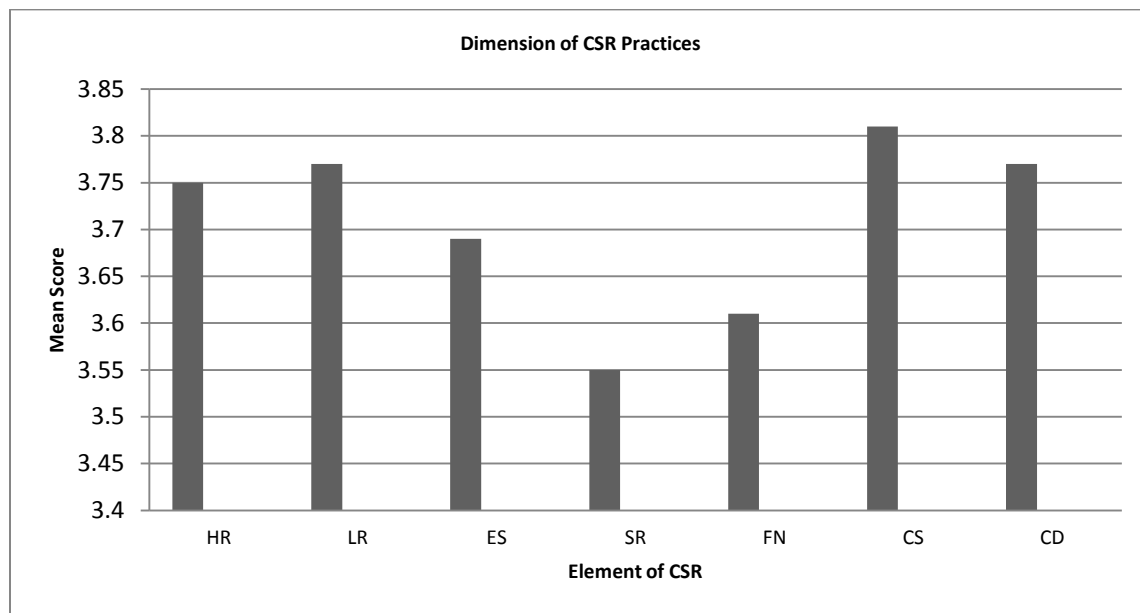
Table 9: Percentage, mean, and standard deviation of respondent response to community driven dimension

Statement	%					M	SD
	1	2	3	4	5		
Organisation encourages its employees to participate in voluntarily activities.	-	5.1	16.3	56.1	22.4	3.96	0.77
Organisation provides sponsorship/scholarship for students.	3.1	5.1	25.5	46.9	19.4	3.74	0.93
Organisation provides internship for students.	2.0	1.0	18.4	53.1	25.5	3.99	0.82
Organisation has charity or philanthropy and monetary contribution to community.	-	5.1	22.4	52.0	20.4	3.88	0.79
Organisation employs persons from lesser advantaged social groups/affected publics.	-	11.2	33.7	42.9	12.2	3.56	0.85
Organisation sponsors cultural and environmental events.	2.0	7.1	25.5	54.1	11.2	3.65	0.85
Organisation supports non-governmental organisations working in problematic areas.	-	9.2	34.7	42.9	13.3	3.60	0.83
) = 3.77							

* Organisation in the above statement refers to UPM.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Figure1: Distribution of CSR elements by dimension.



Note: HR = Human rights, LR = Labour rights, ES = Environment stewardship, SR = Social reporting, FN = Financial necessity, CS = Compliance with International Certified Standard, CD = Community Driven

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

In summary, UPM employees have positive perceptions towards the selected dimensions of CSR. Universities are the current 21st century business entities. CSR initiatives are important communication strategies for higher learning institutions. The current study shows that a majority of the UPM employees, either academic or non-academic, understand about CSR practices in general. Based on the empirical data, three (3) dimensions which were compliance with international certified standard, labour rights, and community driven have shown to be the significant aspects for CSR practices in UPM. However, there is not a specific standardised indicator to measure CSR initiatives and the social reporting in Malaysian universities. This was indicated in this current study whereby the social reporting dimension was the least being perceived by the UPM staff. The need for standardised indicator is particularly timely as the university heads towards a world class ranked university. Some standardised global and local standards and best practices create a benchmark for a clear cut guideline in practising their CSR initiatives. As such, universities (either public or private) in Malaysia can place research universities as their benchmark not only in the academic niche, but also in the area related to social responsibility and sustainable development.

There are several limitations in this study. The study was only limited to explore CSR initiatives from the perspectives of one of the research universities in Malaysia, which is UPM. Therefore, the future study can look into other research universities in

Malaysia, particularly, Universiti of Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), to focus on exploring further on their CSR programs and initiatives. The understanding on the areas of social responsibility initiatives as practised in public and private universities is needed. Lastly, the relationship between CSR practices by universities with employees' job satisfaction and corporate reputation was suggested for future study to enhance the advancement of knowledge in the CSR arena.

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